Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis Project to undergo clarification, new Draft Decision will be issued

(LARAMIE, Wyo.) June 21, 2019 – Through the project administrative review process, Forest Supervisor Russ Bacon identified opportunities to improve the Medicine Bow Landscape Vegetation Analysis by clarifying some areas of the project, therefore, Bacon has withdrawn the project's Draft Record of Decision to address citizen concerns and strengthen the project.

"Our overall goal is to include citizens in the management of their national forests, clearly communicate the why and how of our management actions, and resolve citizen concerns before the decision is finalized," said Bacon.

Over the next few weeks, forest officials will clarify the import role the public will play in developing and implementing the project, refine the Adaptive Implementation and Monitoring Plan throughout the life of the project, and better align resource specialist reports with the final Environmental Impact Statement and draft Record of Decision. A new Draft Decision is expected to be issued later this year and a new project timeline will be established.

The proposed project will provide the planning, implementation, and adaptive management foundation for improving forest conditions through treatments on a maximum of 360,000 acres, spread over a 15-year period.

The Landscape Vegetation Analysis project, also known as LaVA, intends to authorize adaptive management of forest vegetation in a timely manner. LaVA will allow removal and utilization of beetle-killed timber while it is still marketable and will reduce the risk of wildfire near communities.

This landscape-scale proposal was developed by the USDA Forest Service along with multiple cooperating agencies. It will accelerate the pace and scale of active forest restoration using a wide range of tools. Those tools include tree thinning, harvest, and hazard tree removal, as well as prescribed burning in the Medicine Bow National Forest, Sierra Madre and Snowy Ranges

The initial Proposed Action for the project was presented to the public in July of 2017. A draft Record of Decision and Final Environmental Impact Statement were released on April 19, 2019.

Project information is available on the Forest web site at www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=51255.

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